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"THE English nation is never so great as in adversity; there has never been a time when a great sense of responsibility has been thrown upon the people of this country, when they have not answered the occasion, and shown that matchless energy which has made, and will maintain, their position as the leading nation of the world."

BEACONSFIELD.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The lull on the battle-front of the Somme last week was not expected to last more than a day or two, and on Thursday the Germans began pounding away again with massed troops and a big display of guns. Attacks were made with extreme violence on our front between the rivers Somme and Avre, and further south on the Oise front of the French. On the right and centre of the British line nothing was gained, but our troops were pressed back a short distance near Hamel. The enemy's attack west of Albert was completely repulsed. In the region of Grivesnes and Montdidier the Germans used fifteen divisions, but in spite of ten times repeated attacks only gained some hundred yards of ground, the French still retaining the heights which are presumably the goal of the enemy's efforts. At Grivesnes all the attacks failed, and counter-attacks won some ground.

On Friday increased artillery power and a series of strong infantry attacks by at least ten divisions applied to our line for fourteen miles from the Somme upwards had practically no results. South of the Somme no large attacks were made on our front, and the French improved their position at several points. By the week-end the Germans had gained nothing substantial, and the only event of importance was the French withdrawal by order from a dangerous salient south of the Oise near Chauny. Since that time the German efforts have slackened in our part of the line, and further down the French are holding their own against furious onslaughts. Altogether little advance has been made by these expensive attacks.

On Monday heavy shelling between Lens and the La Bassée Canal and east of Armentières was the preliminary of an attack on a fresh part of our line for eleven miles which began on Tuesday. In a thick mist which rendered observation impossible the Germans after a heavy day's fighting forced their way into positions occupied by us and the Portuguese. At Givenchy, near La Bassée, lost for a time, but retaken by a brilliant counter-attack which secured 750 prisoners, and at Fleurbaix, south-west of Armentières, they were repulsed, but between these two places they drove a wedge into our line, taking Lavantie, which is two miles behind our old line, and Richebourg St. Vaast. On Wednesday the attack was developed north of Armentières, and our troops were pressed back to the line of Wytschaete-Messines Ridge and Ploegsteert. Some Germans were reported to have got far enough to be near Steenwerck. South of Armentières there is a violent struggle for the passage of the Lys and the Lawe. At mid-day on Thursday we still held the ridge just mentioned, but our troops had been withdrawn from Armentières.

Our airmen maintain their superiority over the enemy. On Saturday, in spite of rain, large formations went out and punished massed infantry south of the Somme with 500 bombs and some 50,000 rounds from machine-guns. On Sunday in the same region six machines were brought down, nine driven down out of control, and two shot down by our anti-aircraft guns, our own losses being four missing.

We cannot be surprised that the majority of respectable Finns are pro-German, and that the White Guards are officered by active young Germans. The Entente Allies favoured the Russian Revolution, which is represented by the Red Guards or Bolsheviks. All people who have throats to be cut and pockets to be picked prefer German discipline, however harsh, to the glorious democracy of Lenin and Trotzky. While British and Japanese marines are landing at Vladivostock to protect life and property from Bolsheviks subsidised and led by Germans, British forces are co-operating with Bolsheviks in Finland to save Kola Bay and the Murman railway from the Germans and Finns. Truly a paradoxical position, the result of the British Government's lack of a foreign policy. The establishment of a German force at Kola Bay in the Arctic Sea would be a real danger.

One wishes heartily that the Prime Minister would give up making boastful speeches. His message to the American luncheon at the Mansion House that "in the next few weeks the Americans would give the Prussian Junkers the surprise of their lives" is mere subaltern's slang, and has no relation to the facts of the military situation. This sort of thing is about as silly as Hindenburg's reported saying that "on April 1st he would be in Paris," which, by the way, we doubt whether he ever did say. But dignity is not Mr. Lloyd George's strong point. The supplicatory telegram to the Americans to hurry up, read by Lord Reading at a public dinner, is one of those messages which should have been written or cabled privately, but not published. The Americans, as Mr. Edward Marshall says, want facts, not sentimental appeals.

The British and French Governments have promised to supply Italy with something like three-quarters of a million tons of coal a month. About a third of this quantity is to be sent by the French Government to Italy by rail, and the remainder sent by sea from England. But as the British Government has undertaken to replace the quantity railed by the French, practically the whole amount is being supplied by England. Only about a third of the total amount promised was supplied in the month of March, partly owing to shipping difficulties and partly owing to shortage of coal output.

As the newspapers have been full of the praises of the handworkers, who gave up their holidays for the sake of their country, a few figures from the day sheets of a Yorkshire colliery, working three seams, may be interesting. On Thursday, the 28th March, the percentage of absentees in one pit was 26.77, the total percentage for the three being 19.64. On Friday, March the 29th, the absentees in the same pit were 33.07 per cent., the total absentee percentage being 18.48. On Saturday, March 30th, the absentees in the same shaft were 32.80 per cent.; the total being 21.72. On Tuesday, 2nd April, the day after Bank holiday, 40 per cent. of the men were absent in one shaft, 26.40 in the other, and 26.14 in the third. On Thursday the 4th April, 38.61 per cent. of the coal-getters were absent on seam X; 30.34 per cent. on seam Y; and 20.68 on seam Z., the total absentee percentage being 27.01.

Thus we see that on days when every ton of coal produced is of vital importance to England, France, and Italy, between 25 and 30 out of 100 coal-getters simply absent themselves. This absenteeism, we are informed, is partly due to laziness, to the determination to "play" just when it suits the men; and partly to a desire to evade the income-tax, which the working-classes are very eager to impose on those above them, but quite resolved not to pay themselves. In many cases, as soon as the coal-getters have earned enough to bring them to just under the income-tax limit, they knock off work. The above figures are taken from a Yorkshire Colliery Company. In Lanarkshire we understand the percentage of absentees is much higher. Are we to spend our last shilling and our last drop of blood in order to make England "safe" for patriots of this kidney?

We doubt whether the Government will find it possible to subtract 50,000 colliers from the pits. Coal must be had, and in increased, not diminished, quantities, if we are to supply France and Italy as well as ourselves. Without coal how can you make steel? As an illustration of the hopeless difficulties which the Government are getting into, take the case of coke ovens. The Ministry of Munitions orders the colliery companies to go on putting up coke ovens all over the country; while the War Office proceeds to withdraw the men who produce the coal to feed the ovens, as well as the men who actually work them. On the top of this, they are now about to take away the managers, cashiers, clerks, and accountants who run the financial and commercial side of the business. Another blunder is the indiscriminate application of the draft to collieries which are working six days a week, and those which are only working three days (as on Tyneside) owing to absence of shipping. Surely the men should be taken from the three-day colliery before they are taken from the six-day pits.

After nine months' deliberation behind closed doors the Irish Convention has issued a Majority Report, two Minority Reports, and Five Notes. The Majority Report is signed by the majority of Nationalists, the Unionists of the South and West, and the Labour men. The cause of the Southern Unionists was very skilfully conducted by Lord Midleton; while it has to be admitted that the Ulster Unionists were inadequately represented, Sir Edward Carson, Colonel Craig and Sir John Lonsdale

(Lord Armaghdale) not being members of the Convention. Had it not been for Lord Londonderry, whose intervention in the debates was marked by conspicuous ability, the Unionists would have been without a leader. Why Sir Edward Carson should have left them without any advice is rather mysterious.

The scheme of Home Rule recommended by the Majority Report will, if accepted by the Government and Parliament, necessitate a Bill to amend the Home Rule Act of 1914, as it contains several important modifications of that measure. The Irish House of Commons is to consist of 200 members, of whom 40 per cent. or 80 members will be Unionists. This percentage, which could not be secured by open election, is to be arrived at by a system of nomination in the South and West by Lord-Lieutenants, and by allotting to the Six Counties in the North-East a larger number of elected members than on the basis of population they are entitled to. This system is to be maintained for fifteen years. The Senate is to consist of 64 members, chosen as to 15 by the Irish peers and as to 49 by bodies and interests which, it is hoped, would appoint a strong, non-partisan, second chamber. In the event of the two chambers disagreeing on any subject, including finance, they are to vote together on the issue.

Such is the form of Constitution offered as a settlement by the Constitutional Nationalists, the Southern Unionists and the Labourites. But a machine is one thing, and the powers to be entrusted to it quite another. The four points round which discussion raged were Customs, Excise, Post Office and Police. It is obvious that Customs and Excise, though classed together as indirect taxation, differ essentially. Duties of Custom are external taxation, and are matters of treaty with foreign nations, for which reason they must be left with the Imperial Government. Excise on the other hand is a purely domestic tax, and might be given to the local legislature. The Post Office does not seem to us to matter much, as, though it might be inconvenient to have a different system in Ireland, the inconvenience would be for the Irish. The Police, which means the control of the Royal Irish Constabulary, a quasi-military force, is the most difficult point of all.

The Royal Irish Constabulary is now 1,000 men below its strength, and is no more than 9,500—about 5,000 less than the London Metropolitan Police force. The Act of 1914 proposed that this body should remain under the authority of the Imperial Government for six years: the Nationalists claim that it should be at once handed over to the Irish Parliament; Mr. Lloyd George, we believe, proposes in his amending Bill to transfer it from the Imperial authority, i.e., the Lord-Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary, after two years. The Ulster Unionists are strongly opposed to the control of the Constabulary by the Irish Parliament. But the question inevitably rises in one's mind, could the Constabulary be in weaker hands than it is now? Is it possible to conceive an Irish Executive so feeble and inconsistent as Mr. Duke, compared with whom Mr. Birrell was a Cromwell? Can we be surprised if the Loyalists in the South and West cry out, give us some government, nationalist, labourite, or Orange, anything would be better than Mr. Duke or Mr. Valera?

The Majority Report represents a great advance in the good relations between the Loyal Unionists outside the Six Counties and the Nationalists as led by Mr. John Redmond, a satisfactory result which was largely due to the conciliating and statesmanlike attitude of Mr. Redmond and Lord Midleton. How Lord Midleton's party will feel towards the Nationalists as led by Mr. Dillon we do not know: but we should think that, after Mr. Dillon's speeches about Conscription, they will feel inclined to reconsider their decision. The Ulster Unionists have presented a Minority Report

which is a refusal to accept the Home Rule scheme of the Majority Report. The extreme Nationalists have presented a second Minority Report claiming for Ireland the same form of self-government as is possessed by the Dominions, that is complete naval, military, and fiscal independence.

A committee of five, containing three Unionists, whom we are sorry to name, the Duke of Abercorn, Lord Desart, and Mr. Powell, have signed a Note or Report stating that no scheme of compulsory service can be applied to Ireland unless it has received the sanction of an Irish Parliament. Seeing that no scheme of Home Rule ever proposed by a responsible British Minister has contemplated parting with the control of the Army and Navy, we are astonished that such a document should have been signed by any Unionist, let alone men in the position of the Duke of Abercorn and Lord Desart. If Conscription is not a matter belonging to the Imperial Military authority, we should like to know what is.

The Prime Minister has very properly disjoined the questions of Home Rule and Conscription, and announced that Compulsory Military Service will be applied to Ireland with or without Home Rule. The Irish Nationalists say they will not take Home Rule if it is to be preceded by Conscription. Very well, then let them leave it: let England take the men, by use of bayonet and prison if necessary, and let Home Rule be dropped. Perhaps that is what the Nationalists want, as it would provide them with a grievance on which they could live and thrive for the next half century. Indeed the behaviour of the Nationalists is so silly and so insolent—demanding “a guarantee of British good faith”—that we almost suspect a design to wreck Home Rule at the bidding of the Irish priesthood, who are mortally afraid of an Irish Parliament.

O for an hour of Randolph Churchill! Those “damned dots” are on us with a vengeance! We learn that the Association of Chambers of Commerce, the Bankers’ Institute, and the Decimal Association meditate a revolution of our coinage, as if we had not enough to rattle our nerves with the war and high prices. The good old penny is to be transformed into 4 or 5 mils (not decided which); the familiar “tanner” is to be dignified with the title of 25 mils; and the dear, very dear, “Bob” is to be baptised as a half-florin or 50 mils. Of course everybody admits that the decimal system is simpler and more sensible than our present coinage. But we warn the authors of these Bills to beware how they upset ordinary people with their mils and florins in the present excited state of public nerves. They will have another “Wood’s pence” affair on their hands, and a Dean Swift will not be wanting to the occasion.

Within the British Empire several different coinages are used. In the Dominion of Canada the American dollar reigns. In the Federated Malay States, Hong Kong, and Singapore, the Mexican dollar (nominally 2s.) is the standard coin: while in India and Ceylon the rupee (just raised to 1s. 5d.) is the medium of commerce. Australia, South Africa and the West Indies use the British coinage, with a different design on some of the Australian coins, florins, shillings, etc. Is it proposed to impose a uniform decimal coinage upon the Dominions and Colonies? It is a fact that the cost of living depends a good deal on the standard coin. In all the Latin countries, France, Spain, and Italy, where francs, lire, and pesetas, of the value of 10d. or thereabouts, are the national or current coin, living is cheap, as it is in the rupee countries. In the dollar countries, the United States and Canada, living is dear. There is too much reason to fear that under the proposed decimal coinage bill the florin (2s.) will take the place of the shilling as the coin in which retail prices will be fixed, and the cost of living will be raised proportionately.

Let the London Chamber of Commerce watch carefully the proceedings of Lord Wrenbury’s Committee for the amendment of the Companies Act. Lord Wrenbury, when he sat in Chancery as Mr., afterwards Lord, Justice Buckley, did not conceal his hostility towards all who had anything to do with the promotion or management of joint-stock companies. A harsh and pedantic judge in all company cases, he has distinguished himself, since his retirement to the House of Lords, by writing sentimental generalities to *The Times* about the League of Nations. A lawyer, who is swayed by his feelings, or prejudices, is a dangerous guide. We do not say that the Companies Act is perfect; no law is; but excessive stringency in dealing with company management is as bad as laxity. We have had experience of the Fresh Issues Committee, with its delays and inconsistencies. Let us look to it that this yoke of officialdom is not fastened on the neck of joint-stock companies after the war. The Association of Chambers of Commerce, composed of manufacturers, is rather disposed to be hostile to finance companies. It is the business of the London Chamber of Commerce to protect them.

Like our correspondent, Mr. Sichel, we were puzzled by Mr. Grein’s statement in a libel case that the production of “Salome” by Miss Maud Allan and himself was being subsidised out of public funds by Lord Beaverbrook. Miss Maud Allan is a beautiful dancer, and Oscar Wilde’s play is good: but what’s Salome to the war, or the war to Salome? At last it occurred to us that Lord Beaverbrook might intend to substitute the Kaiser for John the Baptist, and as a reward for her exquisite pirouetting, Miss Allan was to demand the head of William the War Lord upon a charger. That would indeed be what journalists call “some stunt.”

Mr. Asquith’s decision to throw in his lot with the Irish Nationalists in opposing conscription for Ireland undoubtedly complicates the position, and adds to the difficulties of the Government. Mr. Asquith and his Radical tail will put new life into the Dillonites, and afford them just the authority that they lack. The Irish priests will oppose conscription, and will make all the women assist them, and they will quote Mr. Asquith’s name as their warrant. It is difficult to forgive Mr. Asquith’s speech at such a crisis as this: it is difficult to exclude the thought that he has an eye on the Irish vote at the elections, and in the next House of Commons. This conduct will never be forgotten and perhaps never forgiven by the English, Welsh and Scotch electors. It was Mr. Asquith’s plain duty as an Englishman and the member for a Scotch constituency to support the Government in the hour of danger.

The Canadian Government and Parliament have administered a richly deserved rebuke to the snobbish and shameless traffic in titles, practised by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George more lavishly than by any of their predecessors. Sir Robert Borden has forwarded to the Imperial Government an Order passed by the Canadian Cabinet recommending that no honour or titular distinction, except military ones, shall be conferred on any Canadian except with the approval and upon the advice of the Canadian Prime Minister: that no hereditary title or honour shall hereafter be conferred on any resident Canadian: and that if conferred, no title shall be recognized as having hereditary effect in Canada. It is an open secret that in 1910, when it became known that a knighthood was to be conferred on Mr. Max Aitken, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then Prime Minister, cabled a strong protest. But Mr. Bonar Law insisted, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier was politely told by Mr. Harcourt, the Colonial Secretary, to mind his own business. Probably Lord Beaverbrook will not return to Canada.

CONSCRIPTION AND IRELAND.

IT is impossible to predict how long the series of sanguinary battles on the Western Front may last: possibly until the autumn. To meet this contingency the Government have issued a new Order in Council, under the existing Military Service Act, cancelling all previous exemptions, except in a few trades vital to the war, thus "breaking all their pledges," as some Member of Parliament, Nationalist or Pacifist, humorously exclaimed. The Government have also introduced a new Man-Power Bill, just read a second time in the House of Commons, to raise the military age to 50, with power by Order in Council to raise it further to 56, as has already been done in the case of doctors. The Government expect to get many more men by the New Order issued under the existing Act, i.e., by cancelling exemptions, than under the new Act for raising the age. Indeed the Prime Minister told us that they did not intend to use more than 7 per cent. of the men between 40 and 50 for the fighting line, but meant to call them up in order to replace younger men whose exemptions would be cancelled. We agree on this point with Sir Donald Maclean that the limit should not be raised above 48, and we hope that this may be done in Committee. The results of the higher limit would be disproportionate to the disturbance of mind. Look at it how we may,—and nobody knows exactly how the thing will work—the new Order and Act must cause the most awkward dislocation of our industrial life, and will, we fear, in thousands of cases, spell ruin. It cannot be helped: we are fighting for our lives. But we may remind the Government that four-fifths of the revenue this year were provided by income-tax and excess profits duty, which are mainly earned by the supervisory brains of men over forty. The new Act must therefore be executed with an eye to all the factors of the situation, including finance.

Section 1 of the new Bill enacts that "Every male British subject" shall be subject to the provisions of the Act, which it proceeds to set forth. Section 2 enacts that "His Majesty may by Order in Council extend this Act to Ireland, and this Act, if so extended shall, subject to such modifications and adaptations as may be made by the Order for the purpose of making it applicable to Ireland, have effect accordingly." We confess this excites some uneasiness in our mind. Is not an Irishman "a male British subject"? What need therefore of a special clause to say that the King "may" extend the Act to Ireland? The word "may" cannot mean that the King has power to extend the Act to Ireland: it can only mean that His Majesty may or may not, as he likes, apply the Act to an integral portion of his Kingdom. Why is this optional power taken by the Government? The question is not "may," but will the Act be extended to Ireland? The Prime Minister and Mr. Bonar Law assure us that it will: the Nationalist Members assure us that it will not.

Almost simultaneously with the proposed application of a Military Service Act, which England, Scotland and Wales accept cheerfully, it is announced that such a measure of Home Rule will be given to Ireland as is recommended by the majority of the Convention. The Nationalists say they will not accept Home Rule if it is to be coupled with Conscription.

Let us reflect upon the facts. For the last fifty years Ireland has been the subject of the unremitting attention of the British Parliament. A Church has been disestablished; the landlords have been deprived of proprietary rights enjoyed by their class in every civilised country; the peasants and the farmers have been given exceptional advantages such as are to be found nowhere but in Ireland. Contracts have been set aside when inconvenient; and finally the British Exchequer, at the risk of British taxpayers, has lent a hundred millions sterling, at a ridiculous rate of interest, to the tenants to enable them to buy their farms. The agriculturists of the South and West, the manufacturers of the North, have grown rich under British laws, protected by British men-of-war, assisted by

British treaties of commerce. To crown the list of gifts and concessions, it is proposed to cancel the Act of Union, and confer upon Ireland a measure of self-government, of which the conditions have been settled by a majority of the Irish representatives. What return do the majority of the Irish people make to the British people? Britain is at death-grips with her secular enemy, Germany: she is hard pressed in the greatest war of all time. The Irish enter into a conspiracy with Casement to allow a landing of Germans in Ireland for the purpose of invading England. The Irish, in the middle of this German war, openly levy war against the King on their own account, by an armed rising in which British soldiers are killed and wounded. The Irish refuse to take the slightest interest in the war, and by the Irish we mean, of course, the Sinn Feiners and the Nationalists, who are three-fourths of the nation. They refuse to be conscripted: they exult at the news of a British repulse or a German advance. Why do the British suffer these things? In Germany, or indeed in any other country but ours, the Sinn Feiners would have been shot in hundreds for rebellion in time of war. Instead of shooting, a small number were imprisoned, and almost immediately released by Mr. Duke as "hunger-strikers"! Do the Government really mean to apply the Military Service Acts to Ireland, or is the promise made to soothe English public opinion, and to get the men here and in Scotland? If the Government really mean business in Ireland, they must recall Mr. Duke, and appoint a Chief Secretary with the nervous equipment of an average Briton. For they will not get even ten divisions without resolute compulsion and possibly some bloodshed. Mr. Duke is not fit for work of this kind, and the sooner he is restored to his chambers in the Temple the better. The Home Rule Bill, to which the Ulster Unionists object, has been offered, and insolently rejected, and should therefore be thrown into the historical dustbin.

WAR ETHICS.

[Last week we published an article setting forth the good effect of war upon national character. The following communication from a soldier discovers some of its less refining results.]

A CERTAIN youth, whose frame, lacking a forearm, may be said to be diminished by a cubit, told the writer in confidence one of the incidents, which out of many months' sojourning on the Western front left most impression on his mind. In a back country-side he had seen against a slope of grass a smocked yokel exercising a white blood stallion with a red cloth on its back—"gules" was the only word, he said. He had spoken of this to nobody for fear he should be answered with a computation of how many meat rations the creature might yield, if future needs consigned it to the pole-axe of the master butcher.

This curious psychological instance jumps with a war outlook, which is by no means peculiar to him. Indeed the only surprising thing about it is that he mentioned it to anyone at all. From France he had sent for a gramophone with records of all the latest ditties from revue and musical comedy; and when on short leave he always improved this vicarious acquaintance by visiting in turn the entertainments themselves. His war conversation evinced the utmost particularity in contrasting the charms and accomplishments of famous ladies of the footlights. He laughed boisterously at the slenderest pleasantries, developed a remarkable vocabulary of active service jargon enhanced with dubious Gallicisms and embellishments of a more polychromatic order, and professed to a gallant satisfaction in the company of the very gay, fairly young daughters of mine host of the village *estaminet*.

Before the Emperor William entered into his scheme of life he would have dismissed these damsels as soon as seen from his mind for a set of blowzy slatterns; the dental smiles of their sisters of the revue would have left him cold;

list of the Act of self-settled hat re- to the with her in the a con- germen- . The levy by an ed and test in- course, the three- r, they s of a do the deed in would of war. isonised, like as y mean r is the and to r- nment all Mr. nervous not get on and r work to his Rule s been fore be

gramophones were to him anathema; and his conversation, if not perhaps always everything it might have been, was at the least a model of refinement. That a boy, who loved no reading so well as the prose epic of Mallory, should develop as a man a belated taste for the lighter type of magazine may seem strange hearing; yet so it was here, and is in effect in many like cases.

The truth is that when confronted naked with the phantasm of war—of murder and sudden death and hardship cloaked in the ceremony of a drab monotony—you cannot afford to be frank even with yourself. A kind of haphazard philosophy of pretence has more or less unconsciously evolved itself out of war conditions, which may be roughly construed into "create your fools' paradise and live in it." An Englishman has a profound distaste for anything which upsets his idea of humour as the basis of being, and clings to the last to that somewhat illusory creed. To talk, to think seriously in the middle of war is to lie in too close to the wind. The German, who takes his war more to heart, appears to like to declaim such sentiments as "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori," while the Englishman would probably remind him that the writer of that verse confesses to having chosen discretion as the better part of valour when brought to the personal test.

Part and parcel with the philosophy of pretence is the fatalistic spirit, in which every man mounts the parapet; he persuades himself that his destiny has been written for good or for ill, because, did he face the fact that his chances were better if he stayed in the trench, the instinct to do so would be almost unconquerable. It is a sound and practical philosophy; if it is not magnificent, it is nevertheless war.

There is no denying that the immediate tendency of active service is to brutalize rather than to enoble. Deliberate living for the moment, accompanied by resolute suppression of thought and rejection of beauty in the fine arts (as too dangerously serious) has been to that. Yet one is often inclined to wonder how many of the men who plaster the walls of billets and dug-outs with prints of the inevitable young lady of the sidelong eyes and amazing lengths of hose-clad leg, or who sing with apparent gusto some mawkish and tiresome popular air, really do so from choice. Possibly far fewer than would appear; perhaps the ambition to conform to the traditional military pattern fostered by senior officers of the old school has something to do with it. If so it is merely a phase of the philosophy of pretence.

Out of all this apparent materialism one might suppose it to be the business of the Church to conjure some spirituality. She is, however, too busy disputing for or against the consecration of a prelate on abstruse grounds of dogma, which to the lay mind of a war-seasoned soldier seem immaterial, and to demand a course of Gibbon as an antidote. To blame Christianity for the failure of the Church, as the fashion sets, is palpably silly. But for the Army chaplain, who, after all, even at the front is exempted from some dangers and as far as possible from the discomforts of campaigning, to play the pulpiteer is sillier. There are, of course, fine exceptions, those who realise that the daily sacrifice of the man in the trenches is better religion than the possession of a store of doctrine, who often voluntarily incur hardship and risk. But the majority is divided into two categories; those whom self-consciousness leads to be, as you might say, ultra-parsonical, and those whom it makes unparsonical. The difficulties of both arise from the convention of secluding their profession from the experiences of life, whereby in this wisdom the instructed have outstripped the instructors. The consequence is that the Church is not qualified to give advice where it is most asked. The philosophy of pretence is the greatest puzzle of the young man of parts—how much he owes to Philistinism and how much to himself. In donning uniform he surrendered his individuality to the social machine of the army. That machine requires of its cogs that they should fit into each other; if they do not, the offending

cog will be automatically ground down by the action of its fellows. In application this means that the youth with a taste for beauty and the arts conceives it his duty to conform to the universal Philistinism of his environment and thereby betray his own principles, as doing otherwise he would negative his own professional usefulness. He merely makes a mental proviso that the condition of things military which demand such a sacrifice should not be. He realizes that to be seen with a copy of Theocritus in his hand would be accounted a sign of humorous imbecility and selects instead the feuilleton of a daily newspaper. The Church cannot help him here and indicate to what extent he is warranted in asserting his own personality, as she is occupied in discussing the repatriation of Jews into Palestine, in which question the only interest he can find is the possible prospect of relieving the congestion in Brighton.

Nevertheless there are not wanting signs that this war Philistinism is staling of its own very barrenness, and that a great aesthetic revival is in process of parturition comparable only to the Renascence of the sixteenth century.

MR. HALL CAINE'S "PRIME MINISTER."

IN the course of the season a dramatic critic, unless he be habitually indignant by temperament or faith, tends to grow increasingly tolerant of the theatre. It is wearisome to be perpetually blaming the theatre for not being what, after all, it neither professes nor tries to be. We have ceased to expect it to give us any recognisable reflection of our civilisation, or to contribute anything of value to our thought. It has long ceased to be witty, as wit is understood in literature, or even in good conversation. It no longer endeavours after anything that can pass for art or style in delivery. Nobody cares in the least how plays are written. As play follows play we come at last to be content if the authors and actors know their technical business well enough to give to some recognised formula of the moment an appearance of grace or novelty which may suffice to conceal its poverty. We applaud our more ingenious dramatic authors as we should applaud a cook who found some unexpected way of dressing chestnuts.

But there is a limit to the acquiescence of the most subjected playgoer. He occasionally finds himself suddenly awakened from a creeping hypnosis by some particularly outrageous affront to his intelligence. At such times he is tempted to wonder whether our civilisation has not been too dearly bought. Was it not better to run naked in the woods with the noble savage than to have these same woods pulped for the perdition of our faculties? Were we really wise in converting the forest primeval into the raw materials for unlimited supplies of paper?

Into such an abyss of speculation are we plunged as we watch the incredible course of Mr. Hall Caine's new play at the Royalty. We feel about this play that it involves the whole human intellect in a general disgrace. It appeals perpetually and precisely to all that is falsely facile in our emotions and tediously common in our intelligence. It confronts us as an almost obscene sample of the degradation to which the human heart and brain can be brought when they lose touch with natural feeling and disciplined reason. Mr. Hall Caine's genius for vulgarity, in the strict sense of the word, is infallible. It never abandons him, whether it be in the plotting of his scene, the phrasing of his matter, the managing of his sentiment, or the marshalling of his platitude. We are constantly in the dead centre of the world of tenth-rate fiction and feuilleton journalese; of politics, life, society, morality, religion, sex and manners as they are understood by the callow and illiterate.

Consider for a moment the theatrical technique of Mr. Hall Caine's "The Prime Minister." The Prime Minister is discovered sitting in his room with the

principal members of his Cabinet about him. They are waiting for an important message from Berlin over the continental wire. If it does not arrive by midnight there will be war with Germany. Into these deliberations breaks a messenger with news that the Prime Minister's little girl is awake and that she is crying for her father. He leaves his Cabinet colleagues to comfort her. This exquisite touch is intended to convey that the Prime Minister, under his "cold, hard exterior" conceals a "tender heart." It also enables the Prime Minister's colleagues to inform the audience all about the Prime Minister and his family by telling one another what everyone of them already knew. When the Prime Minister returns Mr. Caine requires his room for an interview between the Prime Minister and his sister touching a nursery governess who must be dismissed. The Prime Minister accordingly sends his colleagues away into another room, telling them they will find some cold supper there. In a few minutes Mr. Caine requires them all back again. Nothing is easier to this master of strategy. All four gentlemen return with grave faces, presumably supperless, to announce that the Prime Minister has forgotten one thing, namely that there is a difference between Greenwich time and continental time. They bravely deduce that it will be war when the clock strikes eleven, and that their presence on the stage is even more indispensable than they thought.

We need hardly afflict our readers with examples of Mr. Caine's dialogue in this or the following scenes. It is all in the tradition of the "cold, hard exterior" and "tender heart." We will only assure the readers of ephemeral fiction that the word which they expect will never be pretermitted.

Mr. Caine's conception of character is worthy of his theatrical technique and of his dialogue. The Prime Minister is presented to us as his ideal of the inflexibly conscientious public man, a man who cannot be imagined as sacrificing public policy to private inclining. To this inflexible public man there enters a young woman pretending to be a Swiss governess engaged by the Prime Minister's sister to take charge of his daughter. The Prime Minister finds out that she is really a German spy who has come into his house to do him a mischief. Naturally you infer that he will hand her over to the police in accordance with the Aliens Act which he has so inflexibly passed through Parliament. But you have forgotten the warm heart under the cold, calm exterior. The young woman pleads hysterically and swears a dreadful oath never to see her people. So the Prime Minister "buys her soul not with bread but with blood," or something to that effect. She remains in his house and has the run of his private room and the care of his child. The inflexible Prime Minister breaks his own inflexible laws, interferes with the police, criminally endangers the safety of his government and of his country, in order that he may indulge a lust for the foolish, fine attitudes and sentiments which spring eternal in his author's breast.

We will not pursue Mr. Caine into the intricacies of his story, or deal further with his offences by specific instances. It would be a needless exasperation. When Mr. Caine deals with high passions and big ideas they become false and common owing to his incapacity to feel according to nature or to think according to reason. His worst offence is his pretentiousness. He must needs treat of matters which lie wholly outside his experience, education and personality. If "The Prime Minister" were presented as an ordinary spy melodrama it might pass with others of the type as a production necessary to current theatrical commerce. But "The Prime Minister" is presented as a play of ideas by an author who has never shown any capacity for thought, as a play of politics by an author who has apparently not the faintest notion how diplomacy or public life is carried on, as a play of emotions by an author who has dealt exclusively in all his works with the sentimental cliché of popular romance. His idea

of English society admits of a Prime Minister who can be suspected of seducing his child's governess, and of gentlemen who discuss their leader's most sacred feelings in ponderous decasyllables. His ideas as a teacher (which he complacently aspires to be in every line he delivers) are limited to commonplace invective against war and worldliness with frequent references to Church bells, Christmas candles and the trite apparatus of popular romance. Where the teaching is right it appears as a degraded version of truths immortally rendered by men who really understood what they were saying. Where the teaching is false it simply shows that Mr. Caine has never comprehended the message he defiles.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY.

BY the death of Claude Debussy European music is bereaved of its most original personality. No composer of the present day has had a greater influence on the world of music. Even his forerunners, like Gabriel Fauré, and his rivals, like Richard Strauss, could not remain wholly impervious to his incentive.

England may claim the distinction of having given him the most sympathetic reception. Even in France he did not enjoy the uncontested glory accorded to him in this country.

Claude Debussy died in the prime of life, scarcely fifty-six, after a painful illness which had often interrupted his work during several years. By dint of great effort, he succeeded during the war in finishing off three of his short Sonatas and a collection of pianoforte pieces, which retain the traces of his genius, but no longer show all his sureness of taste and sense of proportion. He was born at Saint-Germain-en-Laye,—the town of the great King Louis XIV.—and no one was more French than he in spirit and in art. Long looked upon as an unprincipled revolutionary and a creator without respect for the laws of architecture, he was in reality penetrated by tradition and the respect for form, and most mindful of construction, proportion, and artistic balance. He never wrote unless he felt himself irresistibly attracted; he had no regard for mere matters of fashion or outward success. All his life he preserved a somewhat misanthropic attitude which made him resemble, in more than one point, that illustrious ancestor for whom he had such great affection, Rameau.

He never stooped to any flagrant denunciation of those who defended superannuated aesthetic principles, and towards the end of his life he no more thought than in his earlier days that his position or his work entitled him to advise the younger generation.

He made all his studies at the Paris Conservatoire and won in 1884 the "Prix de Rome" with his Cantata, "L'Enfant Prodigue," a work inspired more by the melodic practices of Massenet than those appertaining by right to his own style.

But one of the most striking features of his work is the rapidity with which he established its real characteristics. At eighteen he wrote, among other things, a song entitled *L'ombre des arbres dans la rivière*, which, to this day, remains one of the works most typical of his manner. As a rule, young composers send from Rome works marked by uncertainty and the contradictory influence of all their masters, but Debussy sent, in 1886, *The Blessed Damozel*, a little oratorio which is one of his best works.

He was, for a time, regularly associated with the younger men of letters, especially those who used to gather every Tuesday at the house of Mallarmé in the Rue de Rome. It was through this intimate daily contact with the best poets of his generation that he acquired his deep insight into the spirit and atmosphere of modern French poetry, and came to realise fully its musical possibilities. This enabled him to write such masterpieces as the *Cinq Poèmes de Baudelaire*, the *Chansons de Bilitis*, the *Ariettes oubliées*, the *Fêtes galantes*. These songs alone would be sufficient to keep his name alive for a long time to come.

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But Debussy was endowed with the gift of lending great utterance to every form of his art. He wrote but a single String Quartet, yet it proved to be a masterpiece of modern chamber music. He composed but one music drama, and that is *Pelléas et Mélisande*. As regards his piano music, no composer since Chopin has enriched that instrument by gifts so numerous and so novel.

The feeling for the picturesque, and the inclination towards literary associations characteristic of French music, were united in him with a rhythmic sense that made him revive old dance measures and bring them into harmony with modern ideas. He expressed, without haste, without loudness, and without superficial or gross effects, all his imaginings, from the vaporous structure of the clouds and the rippling of water in the sunshine, to the most poignant tragedy, because he was always as essentially implacable and simple as he is in the last two acts of *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

It would be futile to compare Claude Debussy to Richard Wagner or Richard Strauss; their aims were different, and the question is merely whether an artist had a definite end in view and whether that end was worth the effort it exacted.

Debussy's aim was a double one. First of all, he endeavoured to free musical expression and press into its service resources that had been either neglected or forgotten. It has been said that new horizons were opened up to him during his visit to Russia at the beginning of his career, but this is scarcely correct; he merely found in the use of inherent racial elements made by the Russians in their music the justification of ideas which were already his own. He had then already looked back upon the past and outstripped the forms of German classicism; he had gone back even to the wonderful polyphonists of the Middle Ages, to the "Singers of the Renaissance" and the orchestral audacities of Claudio Monteverde. Rejecting the formulas of scholastic development, he endeavoured to endow his music with the harmonious freedom of the Renaissance, blending refinement and freshness, the taste for nature and for culture.

The most individual trait of Debussy's work is, in fact, the constant presence of his intellect and his feeling for nature. All his works, refined as they are, move in a vital atmosphere of unerring reality, and one never feels them to be the product of mere application.

It is the usual experience of innovators in any form of art to be judged at first by the medium they employ rather than by what they intend to express. It was held that Debussy's merit consisted in the daring use a few unusual harmonic sequences, and it was thought that his talent was limited to the putting together of seconds and ninths, until one day those who had denounced his innovations began to protest that the roots of these practices were to be found in the old masters. But the real interest of Debussy's work lay elsewhere. If he aimed anywhere at the discovery of more flexible material, it was because he had to find musical terms for landscapes and elements, and for abstract conditions of the mind which could not be bent to the formal rules of classical doctrine and discipline.

Debussy has too often been called an "Impressionist." It was thought that everything had been said in comparing the *Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune* with the paintings of Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro. It is true that he, like these painters, succeeded in refreshing the colours of the artistic conceptions he offered to the public, that he too infused into his art the breath of nature and open air, but the aim of his compositions nevertheless differs widely from that of the French impressionist painters.

It was a mistake, no doubt, to discern first of all the reality of construction in a work so fluid, delicate and supple as the now celebrated *Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune*. As in many other works, Debussy seems here to have taken as motto the words of Rameau: "Il faut cacher l'art par l'art même." To-day one understands how this subtle evocation, the apparition of a half-divine human being in the sunshine of a

radiant afternoon, is composed, and how its elements are distributed with wise and ingenious discretion. Herein Debussy followed the example of truly French art and, leaving German music to be drawn into the vortex of a more and more intemperate megalomania, always sought to obtain the maximum of effect with a minimum of means. In this respect there are few subjects for study so curious and attractive as the full scores of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, or the three *Nocturnes*, or *La Mer*. They show how Debussy, far from accumulating the instruments or heaping the parts one upon the other, always strives to realise his intentions by a discerning choice of the instrument best adapted to the production of the desired effect, and how he finds the fittest phrase for its expression.

His adversaries pretended to see in him a morbid spirit, fit only to express unhealthy attitudes of mind and matters connected solely with the heart or the intellect. One certainly does not encounter in Debussy the kind of power that is found in the "Ring," or the brutality of Richard Strauss; but there are degrees between brutality and weakness, and in *Pelléas et Mélisande* the characters and atmosphere were made for him; he was a musical psychologist realizing the intentions of the dramatist.

Apart from the inspiration derived from sunny landscapes, from passing clouds, from *Reflets dans l'eau* and *L'Isle joyeuse*, Debussy possessed a strong sense of humour which showed itself in songs like *Fantoches* and piano pieces like the *Children's Corner*, *La Sérénade interrompue*, or *Minstrels*.

It is not known in what stage of development he has left his *Diable dans le Béffroi*, a tale after Edgar Allan Poe upon which he has long been engaged, and wherein he proposed to give vent to his musical irony; nor is it clear whether he has gone beyond the first sketches for a "Tristan" in which, going back to the old legend of mediæval France, he intended to oppose his French conception to the genius of Wagner.

He has been, for the young generation of artists, a great example of refinement and conscientiousness. He has shown that France is capable of producing a true musical genius, and he has, more than anyone else, contributed towards the growing reputation of the French school outside his country.

A GERMAN THEORY OF THACKERAY.

THERE is a certain type of German scholarship which may be relied on as a source of innocent pleasure, if used in moderation. Its method is to compare things, whether they are like or not, as Professor Alois Brandl of Berlin compares the night-pieces in 'Christabel' and the 'Eve of St. Agnes,' remarking, as if it were an accidental thing, a minor point of difference, that in the one place there is a witch, in the second a lover. A dissertation on the genesis of 'Vanity Fair,' by Dr. Erwin Walter, seems to have escaped notice in English reviews. It was published in 1908 as No. LXXIX. of the series named 'Palaestra,' edited by Professor Brandl and two colleagues in the province of German and English philology. 'Entstehungsgeschichte von W. M. Thackeray's "Vanity Fair"', Dr. Walter's contribution to English philology, is a little beyond the average of such things. It combines two opposite modes of work; the laborious accumulation of meaningless similarities with theoretical inference from non-existent premises. The heroine of this, as of the original history, is Rebecca Sharp, who, as we know, numbered one or two German students among her victims. She is here explained, very thoroughly and boldly. First of all, she is a Jewess. The laborious analyst has forgotten to give his evidence for this fact; he has discussed many things, but not the pedigree of Miss Sharp. Was not her mother a Montmorency? We have no help from Dr. Walter on this point, nor on the rival claims of the Entrechats, an ancient house of Gascony. Rebecca Sharp was a Jewess, Dr. Walter so asserts;

further, she is the counterpart and contradiction of Scott's Rebecca. Thackeray had already begun his burlesque of 'Ivanhoe,' and it is in the spirit of this parody that Thackeray "out of the full sounding Rebecca made the contemptuous diminutive Becky, and added the highly ominous Sharp as surname"! To be fully appreciated, this should be read in the original German; much of the beauty of the German speculator is lost in translation. The essence of the work is here; Becky of the ominous surname, the Jewess of the pale hair and green eyes, is in satirical opposition to the romance of Scott's Rebecca, and that is the meaning of '2 Vanity Fair.' It is only a small part of the author's demonstration, it is true, if pages and words are counted. Indeed, its daring, soaring, mere-literal-fact-despising, and mostly on the subjective-imagination-relying temerity is so different from the slow, regular, graminivorous gait of the rest of the book that there seems room for the higher criticism to suggest two authors, one flying "dim in the intense inane," the other walking steadily from place to commonplace over a large area. But there will be difficulties; the two hands (A and B) cannot be distinguished at once and certainly. Thus B may be held the author of Miss Crawley in this version of 'Vanity Fair.' He takes her seriously as a specimen of Aunt, and traces the history of The Aunt in previous English prose. "For the figure of the Aunt in English prose before Thackeray not much room has been made." There is no Aunt in Addison, though a perfunctory Uncle. Richardson ignored The Aunt in 'Pamela' and 'Clarissa.' Fielding was the first to give proper consideration and adequate detail to The Aunt in 'Tom Jones': then Richardson came in with Miss Byron's Aunt in 'Sir Charles Grandison.' And so forth, at the regular pace, not without profit, as when we observe that both Scott and Dickens are amazingly neglectful of The Aunt; Miss Wardle, e.g., in 'Pickwick' having no attention paid to her in that relation, unlike Miss Crawley. This, all this, must be reckoned as B—but in all this investigation that Aunt in 'Vanity Fair' is spoken of as *Lady Crawley*. Can the painful collector of phenomena be responsible for this oversight? Has not the daring, but not quite accurate idealist of *Rebecca* done some interfering here?

Enough has been said to show what entertainment may be found in German philology. It may grow speedily stale, but in quantity it is scarcely exhaustible. Dr. Walter, our theorist of Thackeray, whether one person or more, may be recommended to readers who "of these delights can judge." He is rather deficient in one quality which is naturally most frequent in German pupil-teachers their invincible dogmatic certainty and confidence. An example may be found in an old volume of 'Englische Studien,' where the Lord's Prayer was reduced to modern English by a schoolmaster of the name of Weinthal, who taught his pupils to repeat "forgive us our sins as we forgive our sinners, and don't lead us into temptation." The historian of the ideal *Rebecca*, though fairly well protected, is not as absolute as this.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A MAN'S LEAGUE FOR MEN.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—As to the urgent need of a Man's League for the preservation of public decency and order, may I shew up the latest feminist outrage? As an example of atrocious bad taste and utter lack of all sense of proportion, the recent banner-wagging rejoicings at Croydon to celebrate the presumptive dominance of woman over man, and the scandalous betrayal of British Manhood—including our most gallant soldiers and sailors—by the House of Merlins, is hard to beat. To impress and capture the children—quite on Kultural lines—the educational authorities—by a bare majority

of two—were wheedled into giving them a half-holiday, and with banners waving the processions marched to the Parish Church for the vicarial blessing, etc., headed by the Mayoress, Miss Nina Boyle, and Mrs. Fawcett. After which, the Mayor, *en grande tenue*, with Mace-bearer to lend some dignity, led the procession to the Public Hall where congratulatory Addresses were interchanged. Miss Nina Boyle especially distinguished herself by her graceful assurance—according to a press report—that women were going to "barge into big things." This was in allusion I suppose, to her statement in *The Outlook* of September 1, 1917, that "after all we (women) are in the majority in a world in which men themselves have decided that the majority shall rule."

It is hardly credible that such ecclesiastical and municipal rejoicings were organized and encouraged when the fate of our Empire is at stake, at the most agonising crisis of this awful war, with the future of civilisation in the balance, and the angel of death reaping an appalling harvest of our bravest and our best.

At Sheffield, one was not surprised to read that a similar Thanksgiving Service was also held in the Cathedral. "The preacher was the Rev. Canon Donaldson of Leicester, who spoke of the progress of the woman's movement during the nineteenth century, and said 'its success was a revolution and a triumph'—Yes, a triumph of treachery to English manhood. Their dire extremity was a welcome opportunity for snatching a mean advantage owing to the absence of millions of our men fighting their country's battles, and powerless to intervene or arrest the greatest revolutionary measure ever passed by our legislative assemblies. And here again the smug assurance of Divine sanction and blessing for this cold-blooded treachery reminds one of Kultur in one of its most offensive and unsavoury aspects.

I would also draw the attention of your readers to a recent notice in the Public Press on 'Women in Parliament.'

Miss Nina Boyle, who has been associated for many years with the Women's Freedom League, is reported to be a candidate in the coming by-election at Keighley. She states she is coming out with the object of testing a woman's right to stand for Parliament, and that "any opposition on this important point will give grounds for another strenuous campaign" (whatever that may mean) by the women who insist on the full rights of citizenship on an equality with men.

Now does the manhood of the nation approve of this "barging into big things?" If not, are they willing to be up and doing, and put down with strong hand these absurd revolutionary proceedings and strenuous feminist plans of campaign for female dominance? If so, let us form a Man's League for Men and get to work right away to secure a Leader.

Yours faithfully,
I. H. H. GOSSET.

SIR,—I regret to find that my reference to Genesis iii. 16 appears to have annoyed some of your pro-suffrage correspondents, but I note that none of them attempts any real answer thereto.

It is, of course, useless to argue with those who believe that the pains of motherhood are decreed by "nature," or that the Bible is a "myth," or that soldiers have no fathers, or that there are more Gods than one; for such persons cannot believe that the Bible was written for our learning.

Yours faithfully,
J. H. E. REID,
Colonel.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—It seems lamentable that there should at this time be a lack of ordinary chivalry and good feeling on the part of any body of Englishmen towards their

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own countrywomen, no matter what their views on the subject of women's emancipation may be.

England is, whether men like to realise the fact or not, very dependent on the substantial help that is being given by women now, in various branches.

A great portion of the male population of the country seem fairly well dissatisfied with the administration of the country and, judging by what is written and spoken of the Premier down to the influx of petty officials complained of, the administration of affairs is in such a condition one is surprised that any change, no matter how drastic or overwhelming, could be considered by any possibility worse than the present. Personally, I should feel more comfortable if I thought that clean-bred English women were more eligible for England's Privy Council than the foreign male, naturalised or unnaturalised, especially in war time.

However, let that be as it may, women in this enlightened country are still in a subordinate position to the foreign male, so D. S. Fraser might refrain from writing remarks such as the following: . . . "the usual parrot eulogy of 'women's wonderful war work' which we have heard over and over again *ad nauseam*."

There are many subjects one has heard about "*ad nauseam*" during the war to which some people might consider this refreshing by comparison. That Miss M. Pickett's remarks annoy D. S. Fraser is no reason why women in general, especially war-working women in particular, should be singled out for abuse that is well nigh insulting.

To quote another remark—"But the Englishwoman has never had the pluck or spirit to take an equal share in the work of the trenches, although she is continually whining for equal privileges and rights with men at home."

Such remarks as I have quoted would be made by very few of the men who have been in the trenches, or who have passed through the hands of the nurses. If physical disability is to nullify all other worth and value let us at least be just over the matter and disfranchise all English men who are crippled, and the thousands who are not fit enough even to do the work that many a woman is doing now.

However, when a day comes, which one hopes it may do, that war is ended, perhaps the Man's League for Men will find after all that their countrywomen are not in such an overwhelming majority as they think and fear, for probably they will leave England in great numbers, and the Englishman will still be able to share his money, his position, his all, with the foreigner that, naturalised or unnaturalised, he so dearly loves.

No doubt the Man's League for Men will be open to him, and if the Hun element is very strong they should be able to keep the English woman in quite her proper sphere.

Yours faithfully,
M. C. PARSONS.

Ivy House, Newbury, Berks.

A LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I welcome your frank statement in your issue of March 30th, that "there never yet was a great war, in modern times, that ended satisfactorily, or that settled any of the issues for more than a few years." War, it has to be admitted, usually does little more than lay the foundation for future wars. To end war by fighting is, as you rightly state, a "pathetic delusion."

This is precisely the reason why some kind of international machinery is necessary to do what war admittedly cannot accomplish. And here it has to be recognized that the period of exhaustion which inevitably follows a great war may prove a more opportune moment in which to establish such international machinery than the period of false prosperity which preceded the war. Indirectly, then, but only

indirectly, it may be urged that the League of Nations will be a result of the war, in the sense that only the horrors of war have awakened the nations to the necessity of such a League.

Sir John Rolleston, in the same issue of your paper, seems to regard the establishment of a League of Nations as a sign and symbol of a reign of complete international amity and perpetual peace. We ourselves are under no such delusion. We are aware that, even with a League of Nations, wars might under certain circumstances occur. But we believe that many wars on the eve of breaking out, might be avoided if a short delay were interposed and if the facts in dispute, together with an impartial recommendation by an international body, were made public to the whole world, including the peoples of the countries specially concerned. We believe further that if difficulties could be dealt with before they reached the stage of "disputes," this would prove an immense safeguard against war. For this reason we attach special importance to the fifth clause of the basis of the League of Nations Society, which provides that conferences shall be held from time to time between the states, members of the League, to consider international matters of a general character, and to formulate and codify rules of international law. In this way the needs of progressive nations could be met, and their national aspirations satisfied, without recourse to war.

Yours faithfully,
JESSIE BRODIE,
Press Secretary.

1, Central Buildings, Westminster, S.W. 1.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I read with amazement your cynical statement, in your issue of March 30th, that: "The most pathetic of the many delusions generated by this war is the notion that we are fighting to end war for ever." If that were the case the conscientious objectors would all be in the right, and we who are fighting would all be in the wrong. Of course we are fighting to end war. We are fighting in order that right may defeat might. That is the only justification we have for fighting at all. The conscientious objector believes that if everybody were like him and declined to fight there would be no war; we realise that if we did not fight, Germany would dominate the world. We realise that brute force can only be defeated by brute force, and we are fighting to achieve that victory. But the fact that we are using force to defeat force is no justification for our foolishly allowing those ideas against which we are fighting to become imbibed by us. We are fighting to destroy them for ever. That is why we are sacrificing so much and going on with the war until the enemy is destroyed. If and when we are victorious, we shall compel the enemy to agree to become a party to an international tribunal, upheld by the power of an international police force, so that international arbitration may in future be compulsory. This is not a poetical ideal; it is a definite, practical policy. The great danger which faces this country is a growth of militarism after the war. So long as people are going to submit to war as a necessary evil, there will be war; but the time has come for mankind to rise against this intolerable idea. War can and must be prevented. I am an ardent high Tory, but I am sorry to see one of the few Tory journals we have in these days associating itself with the cause of militarism. It will be the ruin of Conservatism.

Yours etc.,
THOMAS HOPE FLOYD.
Scarborough, April 7th, 1918.

Does not our correspondent see that an international police force to compel a recusant nation to submit to arbitration means war? A League of Nations including the Central Empires would last just as long

as the latter chose. A League without the Central Empires would be a mere continuance of the present Entente Alliance.—ED.]

BANKRUPTCY AND ARMY COMMISSIONS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—During recent years many men have had financial trouble through no fault of their own. There have been cases referred to in the Press of men being unable to obtain commissions so long as they are undischarged bankrupts. This is not peace time but war time and it is of far more importance to allow a bankrupt to hold a commission than to remain a private, if he is otherwise suitable. Surely it would not be an unreasonable act of grace to grant such men discharges from their bankruptcies as an acknowledgment of services rendered. There is an admitted shortage of experienced officers and nothing matters but military efficiency.

During recent years a most capable man may have had financial trouble which in ordinary times would never have occurred.

I respectfully suggest that the matter is worth attention because a little time ago there was a great increase in bankruptcies.

Yours truly,

A. E. BALE.

45, Sudbourne Road, Brixton, S.W.2,
3rd April, 1918.

LADY SMITH-DORRIEN'S BAGS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—These bags are known, from one corner of the British Empire to the other, and have been an immense comfort and pleasure to officers and men alike. I have heard the men call them "Dandy Bags" and the French Poilu calls them "Tommie-Bags." Some of the young officers say, "They remind us of the chintzes at home." Many a mother treasures one of these bags, sent home with her son's last effects. And now, I hear, the stock is exhausted, and the demand is greater than ever. Lady Smith-Dorrien's Fund is splendidly managed and run, and over 2,600,000 bags have been sent abroad. For 10s, enough material, tape and labels, with pattern bag, can be had for 27 bags, and the making is easy work for the old and the young. Lady Smith-Dorrien is appealing for more bags, at once, and surely the women will not let her appeal in vain. It is such a little thing for us to do for our fighting men. All information and material can be got at 26, Pont Street, S.W.

Yours faithfully,

A. S. B.

AGHA KHAN AND THE SULTAN.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—When I wrote of the late Sultan Abdul Hermid's "refusal to receive H.H. the Agha Khan as representing any section of the Indian Muslims" I did not for a moment mean to infer that he had refused to receive him in a private capacity, or in other words, had been guilty of personal discourtesy. Such a reception as his Highness in his letter to you has described could be no concern of mine or any writer upon recent history. It was regarded as a part of common knowledge in the Turkish Empire at the time that an Indian deputation, of which his Highness was a leading member, was refused an audience by Sultan Abdul Hermid as Caliph. In a book entitled "Arabia Infelix," by G. Wyman Bury, in the chapter which describes the feeling of Arabians towards the Turks, this rebuff of a deputation is mentioned as a fact of common knowledge, and the satisfaction which it caused among the orthodox Arabians is quoted as a proof of Abdul Hamid's tact as Caliph.

If no such incident ever really occurred, as the

letter of the Agha Khan implies (although he does not say so), I must candidly confess that I, with many other people, have been much misled.

YOUR REVIEWER.

Mr. NEVINSON ON HIMSELF.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have just read your article "Duds for the Imperial War Museum," in the SATURDAY REVIEW with great amusement. I am afraid I am a little late but I have been out of town for my exhibition and seldom trouble to glance at the fatuous praise and comments of hack-journalists whom I know too well personally to do anything but despise.

Where in your article you deal with purely aesthetic opinions will you allow me to offer you my sincere admiration for your out-spokenness?—art criticism in most English papers is far too non-committal—but when you descend into purely personal attacks or rather guesses (thank God I have never known nor met you) on my character and intentions you are not merely foolishly wrong but you betray a cheap clap-trap cynicism, quite unworthy of your sincere aesthetic opinions displayed in your article to which I think you are quite entitled, though I pray and hope they differ from mine on almost every point. You have the impudence to describe me as an insincere blagueur and waster trying to deceive the public with Cubist tricks to hide my technical incompetence due to never having worked in London, Paris, nor Milan, but always absorbed in introspective egoism. Might I be allowed to inform you that I care far too little about the public to mind whether I deceive it or not, and that I am only too painfully aware of my technical shortcomings, which I have and am still trying to overcome by pure hard work and study? My slight leaning towards so-called Cubism is the result of conviction and intention aiming at a more abstract and structural interpretation of an object felt as well as seen, an aim which you are utterly unable to understand, as it has originated since the 16th Century.

I am told you do a little bit of painting yourself, so I must confess I am surprised you do not realise that this method far from hiding incompetence reveals it to any real judge, yet I do not hesitate to use it. However, as there cannot be, nor ever will be, any fixed standard of aesthetics or manly beauty, it is just possible that you are right and I am wrong about the value of my work, but do not indulge yourself in the cheap pleasure of personal attacks on a man's character sincere or otherwise, if you know nothing about it, especially as you have proved that you have no sense of humour, though I fully sympathise with your feelings of irritation against the Art Committee of the Imperial War Museum, as I understand you have not succeeded in getting upon it. Perhaps you hoped that your cheap personal guesses upon an artist's character might help you, as your knowledge of the 16th Century art is valueless in 1918.

Yours etc.,

R. W. NEVINSON.

4, Downside Gardens, Hampstead, N.W.3.
April 7th, 1918.

P.S.—Since dictating this letter I have just received news from an official in Paris that Forain has expressed great admiration for my work. I value his opinions as greatly as I despise your petty personal polemics, especially as I happen to remember when you once before lost your critical faculty and extolled those petty little paintings of crinolines and Italian gardens turned out by some Italian woman; perhaps you still admire them!

[Mr. Nevinson's protest against personalities is like the Gracchi complaining of sedition. If Mr. Nevinson had stuck to his last, which is pictorial art, and not gone out of his way in his preface to apply a very coarse epithet to public schools, he would not have exposed himself to the well-merited rebuke of our reviewer.—ED.]

THE REAL INDIA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR.—At the Paddington railway book-stalls I saw a publication called "India" which is the latest thing in eye-wash from *The Manchester Guardian*. But the real India is not revealed in this bulky advertisement of the cotton-spinners and dyers of Lancashire; and it is just about time that India should know what the indigo planters can do for its sorely-stricken people. The real India is revealed in the pages of the Historical Records of British regiments, and in the Reports on Sanitary Measures in India, all of which show how cholera, malaria, and plague are rampant in every province. But we do not hear of Lancashire bothering itself on sanitary questions, or even on questions of famine prevention.

Many years ago a poor discharged British soldier in search of work found his way to my indigo factory and implored me to put him in charge of a piggery. He was an Irishman, an old artilleryman, who knew what he was talking about; and it then struck me that if I could start rice-mills in Bihar in connection with the Saran canals the question of the prevention of famine in India would be solved, while at the same time rice-meal and peas as feeding-stuffs for pigs would place the ex-soldier in a position to make his living on the land in Great Britain and Ireland. I was so full of the idea that I came home in 1892 to see if I could raise money in London for the scheme. There was not a man in the City who would look at it; and now Nemesis is taking its dues from those who worship the golden calf. Moreover, Irishmen are refusing to fight for us in this war—a proceeding on their part which is enough to make John Shipp turn in his grave. Shipp was an English soldier who rose from the ranks and obtained a commission in the 87th Prince's Own Irish (now the Royal Irish Fusiliers); and this is what he said about the old-time Irish soldier in India: "I must confess I do love to be on duty on any kind of service with the Irish. There is a promptness to obey, a hilarity, a cheerful obedience, and willingness to act, which I have rarely met with in any other body of men . . . Never did I see a man in the 87th Regiment wantonly commit an act of cruelty." Shall we end by losing Ireland as a recruiting ground for our Army?

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

DONALD NORMAN REID.

15, St. Mary's Square, Paddington, W.2.

IS "SALOME" A WAR-AIM?

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR.—It would seem certain from the revelations of Miss Maud Allan's libel action that Mr. Grein is employed by Government at the taxpayers' expense for propaganda-work (whatever that may be), part of which is the propagation of "Salome" with Miss Maud Allan as danseuse. As our American Allies put it, "this licks creation." Why are the sorely beset taxpayers, daily exhorted to save, thus befooled into abetting something far outside anything to do with the awful struggle, and mercifully out of all relation to it? It is fearful and wonderful and blunderful and disgusting. Let us hope that such dully frivolous profanations will be stopped immediately. If drama is to be disseminated as propaganda, why not Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth*? But apparently the war is treated as a pretext for Bolshevism in art.

Indignantly yours,

WALTER SICHEL.

FIXED INCOMES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR.—Your correspondent, a retired pensioner on £700 a year, calls attention to the present exceedingly hard condition of people with fixed incomes.

These incomes have now to be made sufficient to buy food and necessaries at double the cost of pre-war times (I say "double" with hesitation, for the paper on which I write is exactly treble its usual price). With regard to the difficulties of living on £700 a year, I can only offer my sympathy, I have no experience, because I am one of a large body of men who have to live on less than one third of this sum, with the same difficult conditions. You have already allowed letters to appear in the SATURDAY REVIEW, calling attention to this clerical *difficulty* (I think it has been called "scandal"). Whilst sympathising profoundly with the hard case of your correspondent, who has retired on a *pension* of £700 a year, may I say that the clergy have no *pension* to retire upon, and that the amount a civil servant finds too small to retire upon, is three times that on which most clergymen are expected to live, and possibly educate their sons at the University to succeed them.

Yours faithfully,

F. W. POWELL.

Kirkdale Vicarage, Nawton, R.S.O., Yorks.

FEMALE FASHIONS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR.—I recently came across a paper by the late Dr. Hutchison Stirling, the well-known Scotch philosophical writer, who was also a physician, condemning, on ethical, hygienic, and aesthetic grounds, the wearing by women of "low dresses" at balls, dinner-parties, and theatres ("Full Dress": originally published in the *Englishwoman's Review* for January 1st, 1859, and reprinted in the volume entitled "Burns in Drama," together with "Saved Leaves," 1878). I wonder what the author of that paper would have said if he had lived to see women and girls going about the streets at all hours with their bosoms exposed to the east wind and the public gaze. That this foolish and odious fashion should prevail and persist at a time like the present is really almost enough to make anyone despair of the female sex.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MEMOR.

27th March, 1918.

THE CLERGY AND "RECONSTRUCTION."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR.—The clergy are so busy just now discussing "the problems of Reconstruction" that they have no time to heed the warning given to warm-hearted and weak-headed political zealots by Russia, where sacrilege, robbery and murder flourish and the Holy Orthodox Eastern Church lies grovelling in the dust.

If the Russian revolution were right, then Church Establishments are for ever condemned, since the Russian Church, by virtue of its political position and its vast wealth, had the opportunity of frustrating the preparations for revolt by insisting upon administrative reform. If, on the other hand, the revolution were wrong, then the Russian Church is equally blameworthy, since, so far as we know, it made no organized attempt to support the throne and to prevent the Czar and his family from being treated like common malefactors.

Some of the Anglican clergy apparently imagine that they can save the Establishment by helping to throw other property-owners to the wolves. In this they are wrong, for if a general attack were made on the right of private property the Church with its vast endowments would be the first to suffer, and the attack would be the more difficult to withstand because the Establishment does not bear its fair share of the national burdens at the present time. When the heir succeeds to an entailed estate he pays heavy death duties, but when a clergyman is raised to a bishopric with an income of £5,000 a year he pays not a sou.

Surely this is quite unfair? Surely bishops, deans, and the wealthier incumbents might reasonably be asked to pay succession duties?

Yours faithfully
C. F. RYDER.

Scarcroft, near Leeds.

A DIETETIC SOLELCISM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Is it not much more than the proverbial "high time" that the responsible authorities abandoned, at last—at this most critical stage of the world-war, now more than ever demanding the most rigid economy—the policy of compromise for serious and unambiguous intervention *dietetically*? In the earlier period of this unprecedentedly tremendous struggle in defence of the freedom of Europe, and, in fact, of the world, against the threatened domination of the modern Huns, our Government authorities—under the influence, apparently, of sound scientific inspiration—appealing to the country affirmed the superfluosity of *bouphagy* and, indeed, of all flesh meats as regards maintenance of physical health and vigour. And they even proceeded to assert, widely through the Press, that the simplest kinds of fish-meats—such as the herring (combined, as of course, with other various non-flesh foods) are perfectly satisfactory substitutes for the so much craved for butchers' meat. Unhappily, this very rational attitude seems not to be maintained—probably from conviction of the futility of contending against an inveterate dietetic prejudice, so especially British. Age-long neglect of and indifference to the science of dietetics in our schools of all grades, sufficiently accounts for the now so conspicuously disastrous persuasion. But—and this is the special purpose of the present criticism—also a powerful subsidiary influence in perpetuating the delusion, undoubtedly, is the consecrated general misuse of the term "meat," as exclusively limited to the products of the slaughterhouse. It is, of course, well known to all English scholars that the modern form of this significant word is derived from the old English *mete*, meaning human food of any sort, and this etymological fact is abundantly illustrated throughout old English literature. It, therefore, is quite as legitimate to speak of "vegetable-meat," of "fruit-meat," of "fish-meat," of "cheese-meat," of "grain-meat," etc., as it is of "flesh-meat."

Words and names—the Shakesperian Juliet notwithstanding—have had, and still have, enormous, though generally unrecognised, influence upon human thought and, consequently, human habit and action—as our two most illustrious philosophic thinkers, Bacon and Locke have very wisely and very emphatically insisted. Is it possible to indulge the hope that even educated authorities may take the hint and "change all that"?

CANTABRIGIENSIS.

REVIEWS.

THE GERMAN HAND.

Take Cover. By Ian D. Colvin. The National Review, 2s. 6d. net.

WHEN Lucian caused the philosophers to be put up for sale as slaves, it will be remembered that Pythagoras fetched 10 minas, and Diogenes only two obols. Two of the leading characters in Mr. Ian Colvin's lively narrative bear a fairly close resemblance to those revered sages. We make the acquaintance in an air-raid shelter of Sir Theophilus Partington, political orator, with his resonant phrases about "the Defence of Democracy, the Cause of Freedom, the War to end War, a League of Nations, a Scrap of Paper and the Verdict of History." In much the same style Pythagoras taught arithmetic, astronomy, charlatany, geometry, music and quackery. A still narrower parallel can be drawn between Diogenes and Mr. Colvin's clerk who doesn't "hold with history," and who regards patriotism as a superstition of the *bourgeoisie*. Did not the Cynic inform the dwellers in the market-place that they need not cultivate "education or doctrine or that sort of stuff," and that they should take no thought "for marriage or children or native land?" But, if Mr. Colvin had been in Lucian's place, he would, we fancy, have reversed the prices. The Clerk, poor ignorant fellow, may have the makings of a man in him after all; the hack politician would be dear at two obols, and might even be marched off like Aristippus, the Cyrenaic, when none would buy. Of one thing we are quite certain; Mr. Colvin's soldier, who believes in God because he has "gone over the top," would be the pick of the sale and would promptly receive manumission.

Mr. Colvin has been well-advised in summarising his two excellent books, "The Germans in England" and "The Unseen Hand in English History" with a touch as deft as Lucian's own. Presented in the form of dialogue, his arguments should hit the class of citizens that likes to have its information easily conveyed, and if our new propaganda-manufacturers, Messrs. Lord Northcliffe, Lord Beaverbrook & Co., Ltd., wish to produce what they would call "live" literature, they could not do better than use 'Take Cover' for their model. Only its execution must not be entrusted to the common "brainy" journalist, who would inevitably make a mess of things and play into the hands of the controversialists of International Socialism who are both acute and unscrupulous.

Mr. Colvin brings a sound historical method to bear, and, despite a snifly reviewer or two, he has proved conclusively that the peaceful penetration of the Hanseatic League, entrenched in the Steelyard, where Cannon Street Station now stands, completely undermined our national security. Simon de Montfort and the King-maker both withstood this gripping corporation which converted England into "the wool-farm of the Hansa," and Warwick should be regarded from henceforth not as an experimentalist who played shove-halfpenny with crowns, but as a patriot with a definite purpose. For Sir Theophilus's edification, Mr. Colvin duly notes the stretching forth of the hand, no longer hidden, over the Norwegians; the "unbearable arrogance" of the Hansa at Bergen which culminated in the storming of a monastery in which the governor had taken refuge, and the slaughter of himself and sixty men without redress. But there is the even stronger instance of Denmark. That hapless country was forced by the German merchants, after Copenhagen had fallen, to conclude a treaty by which it surrendered two-thirds of its revenue for fifteen years, and promised to elect no king without the consent of

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the Hansa. Norway and Denmark had forfeited their power of production—the herring made history in these days—and that gone, security followed suit. The Merchant Adventurers of Tudor times saved us from the commercial domination of Germany. In that same age, the sagacious Burghley defined the Low countries as the counterscarp to Queen Elizabeth's dominions. To be secure from without as well as within, we cannot permit the Netherlands, and more especially Antwerp, to be held whether by Spanish Philip or French Louis or German William. We are fighting therefore, not, as Sir Theophilus would palaver, for "a scrap of paper" and "the liberties of small nations," but, as Mr. Colvin's soldier is aware in his shrewd untutored way, for "King and Country."

The Clerk remains without a name, but we are convinced that he is called Titmouse, probably with John Stuart before it. He has assimilated all the physic of all the economists, with a bolus or two from the latest Socialist handbook, possibly by Mr. Philip Snowden. Mr. Colvin has rare sport with the youth, a wage-slave in the Public Health Insurance, convicting him of Imperialism, patriotism and other pernicious ideas. Thus he believes in an International League, "or you might call it a Supernational Authority." But might not this arrangement suit Germany which lies at the centre of Europe and not suit England which lies at the circumference? "Possibly" admits the Clerk. In that case the Clerk is an imperialist, the advocate of a German ascendancy, and the scorner of the balance of power, the only alternative. As the Soldier bluntly intervenes, "This League of Nations is a scheme of government by foreigners." But the Clerk doesn't "set much store by nations"; he looks forward to a future, not Syndicalist, but Socialistic. It follows, alas! that if we are all harnessed to the State machine, we must be keenly interested in its welfare, therefore we must be patriots. Thus Mr. Colvin plays with his puppets, not forgetting to develop the employer's function in society, as exemplified by Macphail of Macphail's gyroscopic tea-drying machinery. There he treads closely in the steps of Mr. Mallock and 'The Limits of Pure Democracy.' "Leadership," says Macphail, "is as much to an industry, let me tell you, as capital or labour," and he asks if you can imagine a State official founding a new industry. The Admiralty, with its standard ships, if they can be called a new industry, is not, it must be admitted, an encouraging instance in point. We have treated Mr. Colvin seriously, possibly dully, because his is really a serious book, concluding with a tragic finish in spite of its gaiety. Sir Theophilus has left a trap-door open, and the Librarian, who acts as Mr. Colvin's mouth-piece is killed by a fragment of shell. "The open door," whispers the dying man; "you did not think."

A GIFTED FAMILY.

Under One Roof: A Family Record. By Mary Cholmondeley Murray. 4s. 6d. net.

IN these days of social and general anarchy, the break-up of home life, old ideas of religion, and most things that meant stability in Victorian times, a sketch of life in that period and in a village rectory seems far enough off to attain the dignity of history. It may also suggest that the twentieth century, which knows so much, has lost some things which were worth keeping. Many a family could boast in these earlier days of a nurse who, like the "Nanny" of this book, was a second mother, stern but loving for many years, to a host of children. Compared with such educators, the hirelings, faddists, and sentimentalists of to-day cut a sorry figure. Spartan ideas of work, dress, and home education have gone out; they caused, it is true, what seems some unnecessary suffering, but they created a sense of duty and a firmness of spirit which are "worth while," as the Americans say. They did not create pushing, shrieking, self-advertising girls like the flappers of to-day. They did not create degraded young creatures like the "Nuts," who left home as often as possible, returned to raise money somehow, and to correct their mothers' ignorance or



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lack of up-to-dateness with cool insolence or even swear-words.

We wish that Miss Cholmondeley's brief and fragmentary notes had been longer. The author of 'Red Pottage'—we are glad, by the by, to see a cheap edition of that striking romance—could have made an excellent story of the "trivial fond records" as well as the serious life of the family at Hodnet Rectory. As it is, she has given us vivid but tantalisingly brief sketches of her father, her mother, and the family nurse. Hester, the sister doomed to early death at 22, but amazingly vigorous during her short life in literary and critical effort, is treated at greater length, and we find a selection of her various writings. The best of them is the quatrain,

" Still, as of old,
Man by himself is priced.
For thirty pieces Judas sold
Himself, not Christ."

which figured as a chapter-heading in 'Diana Tempest.'

The short story 'Swept and Garnished' is not a success in the difficult vein of the moral fable. There is no maturity—none, indeed, could be expected—about the various verses, which are often pretty enough, but the criticism on the poetry of Keble shows already Hester's powers of discernment. If she had lived, her passionate intensity, her industry, and a personality that was not to be repressed must surely have made a mark on the world. She wrote her own epitaph:—

" A little candle, feeble, blown about
By all life's winds of care, and gusts of doubt,
Flickered and swerved a time, and then went out." Miss Cholmondeley is right, we think, in making a brief selection from the copious remains of her sister. Youth is almost always imitative; it is speculating in various directions and following various masters. It is seldom original, and generally ignorant. The young people who are amazed at their own powers of stringing verses together and worry editors with them should realise this.

The father and mother who brought up a family of eight were both remarkable people. Mr. Cholmondeley never had any special training as a clergyman, but his family had been great in Hodnet for many years. He somewhat lacked method and organization, but he had a rarer thing, charm. Like his uncle, Bishop Heber, he could live with Nonconformists and make no distinction between Church and Chapel. He knew his people, and they evidently loved him, though he was ignorant of many things which clergymen of to-day are supposed to know. Something of his childlike disposition with its power of forgetting injuries and much else that was tedious, if not distracting, we have seen in other pastors of the olden time, gracious figures with none of the Corybantic fervour of the Revivalist, but always doing good with open hearts and hands. Mr. Cholmondeley "did not hesitate to take into his house an aged and eccentric and hopelessly extravagant aunt, when she had got herself firmly embedded into money difficulties. He went down to Torquay, where she lived, settled her debts, wound up her affairs, and brought her home."

Aunt G. was evidently a character. When she was on her deathbed and suffering much pain, she said suddenly, "Georgiana, behave yourself," drew herself up and died like a Stoic.

The mother, says her daughter, was made for a wide social sphere, and found the life of a country clergyman's wife uncongenial. But she desired no luxuries, and despised the common comforts of to-day. No child of hers was expected to lie on a sofa. She had an iron sense of duty and many trials, not the least of which was the misunderstanding of her children. Unflinching heroism was the keynote of her life. Of how many mothers "nursed in pomp and pleasure" can we say that to-day? She taught her daughters the ideal of "simplex munditiis," which must seem odd to the girls who wear bangles even in the nursery and later flaunt half-a-dozen tawdry rings before they have reached the gold one.



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The Pretty Lady. By Arnold Bennett. Cassell. 6s. net.

WE do not know whether Mr. Bennett wishes us to understand that "The Pretty Lady" is the equivalent of the French term, "a little lady": we can only say we never heard the English expression. Anyway, the heroine, if such she can be called, is an ordinary French "professional," who earns her living honestly at the promenades of the music-halls. This is not a novel, which surely must have some sort of story, and some sort of man or woman of whom we can make a hero or a heroine on the printed page. But Mr. Bennett is too shrewd and experienced to imagine that any section of the public could really like, admire, or be interested in any of the types that flit so airily through these pages. Which of his characters are we expected to love, or to sympathise with, or to follow with interest? Not Christine, surely, who but for the vein of religious mysticism which prompts her to soothe and try to save a drunken colonel whom she picks up at a promenade, is a very ordinary specimen of her countrywomen in that line of business, prettily mannered, thrifty—her luxury being only part of the technique—and subject to sudden bursts of temperament. The sensual, artistic, "poised" bachelor of the Albany, "G. J.," cannot by any reach even of Mr. Bennett's art be made into a hero; while Lady Queenie and Concepcion are merely scurrying phantoms. No: it is not a novel, this last work of Mr. Arnold Bennett: it is a satire or caricature of certain modern society types, biting, very clever, amusing, but marred by the evidences, every now and then cropping up, of having been drawn from an outside point of view. Lady Queenie is a better caricature of the insolent, self-willed, extravagant society woman than "Dodo," or the wife of William Ashe, Mrs. Ward's attempt to draw Lady Caroline Lamb. Most people, even if they have only hung loose on London society during the last ten years, will have little difficulty in recognising both Lady Queenie and Concepcion, who gets the poised bachelor to marry her by the somewhat stale devices of first telling him to marry another woman (Queenie, who is killed in an air raid), and then threatening suicide. Of men of fifty we do know something, or think we do. It is certainly news to us to learn that elderly men of the club would address another as "dear heart" and "old thing"; but it may be done. There is, however, one horrible *gaffe* which proves that Mr. Arnold Bennett, with all his cleverness, is still importing some of the manners and customs of the Five Towns into Mayfair. "G. J." the poised and wealthy one, having installed Christine in a flat, goes to dine with her. Christine orders the servant to take off the boots of Monsieur, and with her own ringed and beautiful hands brings him a pair of slippers! Bachelors, who call Lady Queenies by a pet name and dominate smart sets, do not take off their boots and put on slippers before sitting down to dinner. In the Commercial Rooms of some hotels in the North you will still find a large box labelled "slippers": and we have no doubt that salesmen, city clerks and drummers still practise this oriental rite.

The eighteenth century novelists alternated between sentiment and indecency, between Sophy Western and Molly Seagrim. The nineteenth century novelists rationalised the sentiment, suppressed the indecency, and gave us Ethel Newcome, Amelia, Laura, Lily Dale, and Dorothea Casaubon. They were reproached, not altogether unjustly, with ignoring one-half of life.

The twentieth century novelist drags out that submerged half; descends boldly into the half-world of "horizontals"; analyses complacently its primal passions; and invites us to feast upon its rather sordid details. He gives us Christine.

THE SONGS OF ZION.

The Psalms in Human Life. By Rowland E. Prothero, M.O.V. Murray and Nelson. 1s. 6d. net.

THIS cheap reprint of a work unique in theme and treatment—an encyclopedic miniature and master-work of its kind—is especially welcome. It spells inspiration—the robust inspiration that a crude and sensationalised populace needs. It presents and dramatises the great world-poems, which reach from the shepherd-king to far beyond the Babylonian captivity, not only in "human" but in historical life. It plays on the whole gamut of national as well as individual feeling, for the Psalms are the diapason of the great symphony of the heart. Nor it is the least wonderful feature of these superb lyrics that, springing, as they do, from a source purely and intensely local and racial, they span, like a rainbow after storm, the whole spiritual and emotional horizon. They are majestically sincere and marvellously deep, as in that fine line (unquoted here), "free among the dead." Even when they express hatred—a hatred justified by the highest struggle for existence, they respond to the truest chords of our existence. Nor could any strain of a devitalised Christianity be flabbier than that which has quite recently prompted the Scribes and Pharisees of our own Church to emasculate them. They are the most signal tribute possible to the spell of a manly as well as a divine individualism. "In them," as the author so well says, "is presented the anatomy of all parts of the human soul." It is not however, "anatomy," but immortality. "They collect," in Heine's words here quoted, "sunrise and sunset, birth and death, promise and fulfilment—the whole drama of humanity." Heine indeed, for all his mocking ironies, was perhaps by endowment, affinity and inheritance the sole supreme poet capable of a transcendent translation. He has, in fact, given us a part-version of another Psalm than the one cited, with its "kettle-song," from Jehuda Ben Halevi—"Kennst du noch das alte Lied?"—one may quote the German on the lips of so immense an anti-Prussian as the psalmist of modernity.

Perhaps the most impressive part of the volume is that devoted to the French Huguenots (with whom the author can claim kinship) and to the French Renaissance cult of the Psalms in the most frivolous Courts. A special feature is the re-echoing track of these superb traditions alike in the eighteenth century philanthropists and the paladins of the Indian Mutiny. The literary succession of the Psalms is well and minutely followed. Burns, it may be added, is perhaps the only great poet whom they do not seem in some way to have touched. Perhaps he had heard too many perverted renderings.

But the sole romance of psalmody here missed is that of their source. Mr. Prothero (now on the land—not on the Psalms) has never tried to trace their influence on the Jews of all ages—their tocsin in mediæval martyrdoms, their impulse in every movement of the spirit. If only Heine had recorded them!

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MOTOR NOTES.

By J. O'CONNELL.

The War Cabinet's Report.

A BLUE-BOOK of an entirely novel character and of wonderful interest has just been published. The War Cabinet's Report for the year 1917 is at once an amazing record of achievement in the past, and a clear encouragement for future efforts. It is written in a clear and simple style, and sets forth in language which everyone can understand the story of a year's work and a year's results. No one could read the story without an access of confidence. The Empire which has achieved so much, which has expanded its resources to meet every need, which has shown so unanimous a resolution, cannot fail to attain the final victory. It is a record which should be read by every patriot.

Regarding matters within the scope of these notes the report is more tantalising than illuminating. The demands of the Army and Navy for aircraft, Tanks, and mechanical transport have been "endless," and despite their intensity they have been supplied. "Mechanical transport has continued to progress and maintain a high level of efficiency in spite of the competing claims of Tanks and aero engines." The number of lorries in possession of the Army has increased by 43 per cent. since November 1916; the number of motor cars and ambulances by 73 per cent., and of motor bicycles by 91 per cent. These figures are exclusive of the replacement of wastage. Half a million vehicles have been transported overseas—what proportion of these are motor vehicles we are not told—and 51 million tons of coal and oil fuel.

The Flying Services.

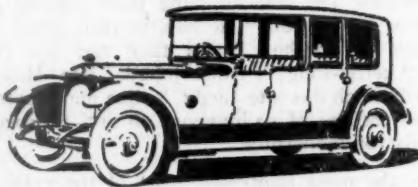
References to the Flying Services in the Report are numerous. At the outbreak of war the R.N.A.S. had less than 100 efficient seaplanes and aeroplanes. At the close of 1917 there were over 2,500, besides a great number of motor boats. In a single week the Aircraft

Patrol of the British Coasts alone flies no less than 30,000 miles. We are given no figures for the R.F.C., and the wonderful development of that service is only hinted at, but we are told that the number of aeroplanes was doubled in the first nine months of the year, and that the number of graduating pilots was more than 200 per cent. greater. Reading between the lines, and with few figures to help us, we may be satisfied that the internal combustion engine, whether by land, or sea, or air—has done its part in the national effort, and that the personnel of the mechanical services has not been found wanting.

Mineral Oils.

An interesting section of the War Cabinet's Report deals with fuel oils. There has been an enormous increase in consumption, and it is clear that the Government recognise to the full the value of the motor car as an aid to national efficiency. "In every service of the State the adoption of modern and efficient methods has resulted in an increase in the consumption of petroleum products." This is the burden of the whole of that section of the Report which relates to fuel oils. The demand increases daily by leaps and bounds, and the most drastic economies cannot cope with the ever-growing cry for more fuel to feed the naval, transport and aerial services. Increases of home production are negligible when compared with these due to war consumption. Private motorists have reduced their consumption from 10,700 tons a month in June, 1916, to 2,300 tons in December, 1917. The saving is a drop in the ocean of petrol required for aircraft, Tanks, motor launches, lorries, ambulances, and military motor cars of a hundred different types. In the Army and Navy the consumption for other than war purposes has been consistently reduced, but the total demand has been consistently increased. Further, every factory extension, and every new machine erected, create a further demand for mineral lubricating oils.

The efforts to cope with this situation will be detailed in a future article.



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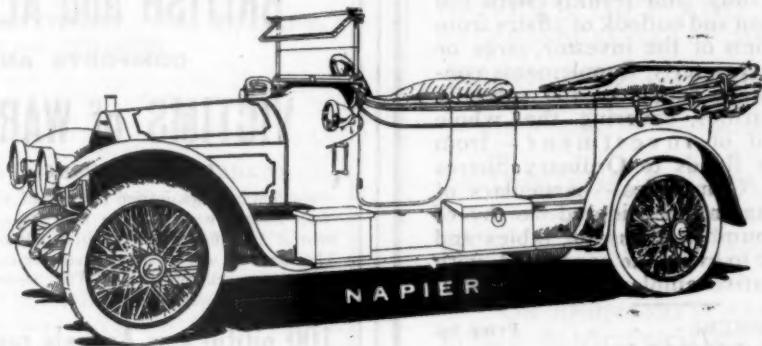
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QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S TOUR.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA and Princess Victoria spent last Thursday afternoon (April 4th), in a visit of inspection to the aeroplane works of Messrs. F. W. Berwick & Co., Ltd., in the West London area. They were received on arrival by Mr. F. W. Berwick, managing director, Mr. Alexander Keiller, Mr. James Grieg, and Mr. Lionel Goodricke, directors. Major C. S. Paulet, M.V.O., of the Ministry of Munitions, was in attendance to welcome Her Majesty and the Princess on behalf of the Minister. The Royal visitors started with the ambulance room, and thence passed to the checking department, at which each of the 1,500 workpeople is required to report on entering and leaving the works. Exactly half of those employed are women and girls. In the machine shops processes were seen connected with the drilling out of cylinders for aeroplane engines, and the cutting and grinding of various component parts.

Queen Alexandra and the Princess frequently paused in their inspection and talked to the workers. In the turnery department the various parts of the wings of aeroplanes were seen under construction. A good deal of time was spent in the dope room, where girls and women were busy completing the canvas covering of the wings, and treating them with what is known as "dope," to increase their stability and render them waterproof. Queen Alexandra inquired whether this process affected the health of the workers, and was informed that it did not, and that the precautions taken were of a very elaborate kind. The Royal ladies talked freely with the girl workers, and Queen Alexandra told some of them, as she had told the workers at other factories, how fine she considered the spirit which had prompted them to work through the holiday.

Having witnessed the making of aeroplane parts, the visitors saw the method by which the 230 h.p. engines are finally fixed in position.

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THE CITY.

Almost simultaneously with the decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discontinue paying interest on Russian Government loans, for which he is not in the slightest degree responsible, comes a report from Petrograd that the Russian "government" intends to raise an internal loan of 3,000,000,000 roubles "for the benefit of the railways." There is, of course, no connection whatever between the two decisions, but holders of Russian securities may derive a little satisfaction from the fact that the revolutionary and anti-capitalist parties in Russia have discovered that they cannot exist without loans. The terms of a proposed internal issue are not stated, and it is extremely doubtful whether a "government" which has repudiated the country's foreign debt will be able to command the confidence even of its own followers to the extent of obtaining a voluntary loan from them, and ultimately the "authorities" in Russia cannot fail to discover that repudiation was a very bad card to play.

Some time may elapse before the faint glimmer of financial sanity will develop into broad daylight. When the dawn of reason breaks it will be recognized that Russia must borrow abroad and the essential preliminary transaction will be an agreement to meet the service of the repudiated debt. Meanwhile, holders of Russian Government bonds in this country must wait for their money. It was not to be expected that the service of the debt could remain indefinitely as a charge upon British taxpayers, especially as Russian bonds, in the main, are held in large blocks. In France the situation is different. There, Russian loans were issued with the sanction of the Government and have become distributed widely among the thrifty French public. The Government is not entirely free from responsibility, and even if it were, the suspension of interest payments at the present time would involve serious hardship upon a large section of the public. As a matter of prudence, if not of policy, the French Government therefore will probably continue to meet the Russian coupons until Russia finds a responsible government which will recognize that Russian obligations incurred in the past continue to be binding upon the new State or group of States by which Russia may be represented.

For the last four or five years the Island of Cuba has enjoyed a period of unprecedented prosperity. The growing of cane sugar is the principal industry and never before have the planters experienced such a long series of consecutively good seasons. It follows that the company bearing the cumbersome title of United Railways of the Havana and Regla Warehouses, Ltd., is carrying exceptionally large traffics; not only is the sugar crop providing big business, but also the general prosperity of the island has augmented passenger and goods traffic to such an extent that recent weekly returns have been a succession of "record-breakers." But the times are abnormal in more than one respect; extremely high cost of fuel, increased wages and excess profit tax are taking a severe toll of profits and the company, since the beginning of the war, has suffered the further disadvantage of being prohibited from raising fresh capital. In November last the chairman stated that more than £1,600,000 had been spent on capital account out of revenue, as the enlarged traffic had made heavy demands upon rolling stock and permanent way and the paradoxical position has arisen that in spite of abounding prosperity it is impolitic, if not impracticable, for the company to transmit cash

for the payment of dividends. For the last three years the ordinary stock has received cash dividends of 5 per cent. per annum, but it is highly probable that for the current year the directors will advert to the policy adopted for the year 1913-14 of paying the dividend in the form of 5 per cent. debenture stock. This explains why the ordinary stock which stood at 85 in June last is now quoted at only 74, in spite of the record traffics.

THE SCOTTISH PROVIDENT INSTITUTION.

The Annual Meeting of this Institution, which was reported in our last issue (p. 308), was inadvertently styled "the eighteenth," whereas it should have been described as "the eightieth." We regret the slip, which, however, will be unimportant to those who know the long and well established reputation of the Institution.

"THE 100 BEST INVESTMENTS."

The British, Foreign & Colonial Corporation, Ltd., 57, Bishopsgate, London, E.C. 2, have just published the quarterly supplement of "The 100 Best Investments," price 4d., thus bringing that annual work of reference up to date; besides the usual features the work contains a special article by Mr. Emil Davies entitled "Investment Under Present Conditions" which deals fully and frankly with the present position and outlook of affairs from the point of view of the investor, large or small, and a number of useful tables and hints of value to everyone concerned with the remunerative employment of capital. The book is arranged in convenient form the securities being set out alphabetically and also in order of yield.

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